

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MASERU 01690 01 OF 02 041449Z
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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION GENEVA
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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MASERU 1690

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SUBJECT: TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF UN SYMPOSIUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: A. STATE 178130, B. STATE 183338, C. STATE 183172,
D. MASERU 1585, E. USUN 3021, F. STOKES/CABRERO AND COOKS/
CABRERO TELECONS JULY 21, 1978,

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PARTICIPANTS FROM TWENTY-TWO COUNTRIES AND
NUMEROUS LIBERATION ORGANIZATIONS, LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, STUDENT
ORGANIZATIONS, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER GROUPS MET IN
MASERU, LESOTHO, JULY 17-22 TO DISCUSS PRISON CONDITIONS
AND MISTREATMENT OF PRISONERS IN SA/NAMIBIA PRISONS AND CULTURAL/
ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF BLACKS IN SA/NAMIBIA. THE PROCEEDINGS OF
THE SYMPOSIUM WERE COMPARATIVELY MODERATE. TEN CONCULSIONS AND
TWENTY RECOMMENDATIONS WERE ADOPTED WITH WESTERN PARTICIPANTS
VOICING RESERVATIONS ON FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS DEALING WITH
THE CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF
APARTHEID, THE PROGRAMS OF ACTION OF THE LAGOS AND MAPUTO
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PAGE 02 MASERU 01690 01 OF 02 041449Z

CONFERENCE, ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND ARMED
STRUGGLE. ALTHOUGH THE SYMPOSIUM HAD CONSIDERABLE SHORT-TERM
IMPACT HERE AND AMONG PARTICIPANTS, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT IT WILL
HAVE MUCH IMPORTANCE WHEN THE DELIBARATIONS ARE SUBMITTED FOR
CONSIDERATION BY UN PARENT BODIES (HRC, ECOSOC AND UNGA). END
SUMMARY.

2. REF A REQUESTED TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF UN SYMPOSIUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS HELD IN MASERU JULY 17-22. FULL REPORT WITH TEXTS OF STATEMENTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE SENT BY AIRGRAM. U.S. INTERVENTION (NORLAND) IN GENERAL DEBATE FOLLOWED GENERALLY THE TEXTS PROVIDED REFS B AND C. TEXT OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SENT REF D WERE DELAYED DUE TO OUTAGE JULY 21 TO JULY 25. NO TEXTS OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS COULD BE TRANSMITTED. DRAFT CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WERE DISCUSSED (REF F) BY TELEPHONE PRIOR TO ADOPTION IN CLOSING SESSION JULY 22. REF E CONTAINS U.S. PARTICIPANT'S (COOKS) CLOSING STATEMENT AND RESOLUTION MOVED BY U.S., INDIA, POLAND, TANZANIA THANKING LESOTHO GOVERNMENT FOR ITS HOSPITALITY.

3. THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF THE SYMPOSIUM WAS TO DISCUSS MISTREATMENT OF BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONS AND ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL EXPLOITATION OF BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE EXERCISE WAS AIMED AT EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING AND CALLING ON GOVERNMENTS TO TAKE STEPS TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE IN SA/NAMIBIA AND THE END OF APARTHEID.

4. THE ACCOUNTS OF VICTIMS OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE BRUTALITY AND FORMER PRISONERS ON ROBBEN ISLAND WITH DETAILS OF DETENTION, INTERROGATION AND TORTURE MOVED ALL WHO HEARD THEM. THERE IS NO DOUBT THE SYMPOSIUM HAD AN IMPACT ON THOSE WHO WERE PRESENT, ALL THE MORE THAT THE PROBLEMS OF TRAVEL TO SYMPOSIUM REINFORCED THE FEELINGS OF THE PARTICIPANTS ABOUT LIFE IN AND ADJACENT TO A UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 MASERU 01690 01 OF 02 041449Z

RACIST STATE.

5. THE IMPACT OF THE SYMPOSIUM BEYOND THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IS LIKELY TO BE MINIMAL. PARTICIPATION WAS SMALLER THAN ANTICIPATED. THIRTY-EIGHT COUNTRIES WERE INVITED BUT ONLY TWENTY SENT PARTICIPANTS. NO-SHOWS WERE ABOUT EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED AMONG OPINION AND IDEOLOGICAL GROUPS. THE ABSENCE OF CUBA AND JAMAICA REDUCED THE DECIBLE LEVEL OF THE SYMPOSIUM. NON-GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION WAS PROPORTIONATELY HIGH AND THEIR INTERVENTIONS WERE INVARIABLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE MILITANTLY ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP. AFRICAN MODERATES OUTNUMBERED THE RADICALS AND THEIR PARTICIPATION LENT A GENERALLY MODERATE TONE TO AFRICAN INTERVENTIONS. THE USSR PARTICIPANT TRIED HARD TO RADICALIZE THE PROCEEDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BUT HAD ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WERE GENERALLY MODERATE DUE IN LARGE PART TO THE DESIRE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPRESENTATIVE, PIERRE SANON, TO ACHIEVE THE MAXIMUM DEGREE OF CONSENSUS. SWEDEN'S PARTICIPANT, CHOSEN BY THE WEO'S TO REPRESENT THEM IN THE CONFERENCE BUREAU (ALSO DRAFTING COMMITTEE), WORKED HARD AND SUCCESSFULLY TO RESTRAIN THE USSR ATTEMPTS TO RADICALIZE THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

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PAGE 01 MASERU 01690 02 OF 02 041451Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 MASERU 1690

6. THE SYMPOSIUM ADOPTED TEN CONCLUSIONS ON ERADICATION OF APARTHEID, GUARANTEE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SA AND NAMIBIA, THE NEED FOR CONCRETE STEPS TO EFFECT FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN SA/NAMIBIA, ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF BLACKS IN SA/NAMIBIA, DENIAL OF RIGHTS TO BLACK LABOR, RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS, BRUTAL TREATMENT OF PRISONERS, RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, SUPPRESSION OF BLACK CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. THE GERMAN PARTICIPANT REGISTERED HIS GOVERNMENT'S RESERVATIONS ON THE CONCLUSION IN WHICH FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS WERE LABELED AS HELPING APARTHEID EXPLOITATION OF BLACK WORKERS AND GOVT'S WERE URGED TO END "ECONOMIC COLLABORATION" AND WITHHOLD LOANS AND INVESTMENTS. THE USSR ALSO RESERVED ON THIS CONCLUSION BECAUSE TNC'S WERE NOT RPT NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED. THE U.S. JOINED THE CONSENSUS TO ADOPT ALL THE CONCLUSIONS.

7. TWENTY RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED PROVOKED SEVERAL WEO RESERVATIONS LED BY FRG (4) AND UK (4) FOLLOWED BY SWEDEN (2) AND USA (2). THE MAJOR OBJECTIONS WERE TO TWO RECOMMENDATIONS CALLING FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 MASERU 01690 02 OF 02 041451Z

RATIFICATION AND APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF APARTHEID. SWEDEN RESERVED ITS POSITION AND FRG, U.S. AND UK JOINED. FRG RESERVED ALONE ON THE RECOMMENDATION CALLING ON ALL GOVTs AND FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS TO END QTE ECONOMIC COLLABORATION UNQTE WITH SA AND WITHHOLD ANY NEW LOANS AND INVESTMENTS. FRG ALSO RESERVED ON THE RECOMMENDATION URGING ALL GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAMS OF ACTION ADOPTED BY THE LAGOS AND MAPUTO CONFERENCES ON GROUNDS THIS HAD NOT RPT NOT BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE SYMPOSIUM (UK JOINED). FINALLY, THE UK ALONE RESERVED ITS POSITION ON A RECOMMENDATION SUPPORTING THE EFFOTS OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND NOTING THEIR TWO-PRONGED APPROACH OF NEGOTIATION AND ARMED STRUGGLE. UK PARTICIPANT OBJECTED TO THE WORDS QTE ARMED STRUGGLE UNQTE. THE REMAINING FIFTEEN CONCLUSIONS AROUNSED NO OBJECTIONS (ON MIGRANT LABOR, AFRICAN RESOURCES AS A WEAPON AGAINST APARTHEID), COOPERATION WITH ECA TO AID COUNTRIES BORDERING ON SA, INVESTIGATION OF PRISON CONDITIONS AND TREATMENT OF PRISONERS, IMPAVFY YOU APARTHEID ON CHILDREN, PRESERVATION OF BLACK CULTURAL HERITAGE, SUPPORT FOR INSTITUTE OF NAMIBIA, CULTURAL EXPLOITATION OF BLACKS, PUBLIC OPINION CAMPAIGNS AGAINST APARTHEID AND PUBLICITY FOR THE SYMPOSIUM'S CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS, SUPPORT FOR THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF SA/NAMIBIA AND UNIFICATION OF LIBERATION EFFORTS).

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